



**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**  
***National Biosurveillance Advisory Subcommittee (NBAS):***  
***Subcommittee to the Advisory Committee to the CDC Director***

In 2007, Homeland Security Presidential Directive 21 (HSPD-21) was issued in recognition of the emergence of significant health-related threats to the nation. Among the mandates outlined in HSPD-21 was the establishment of a federal advisory committee that includes “representatives from state and local government public health authorities and appropriate private sector health care entities, in order to ensure that the federal government is meeting the goal of enabling State and local government public health surveillance capabilities.” HHS was charged with this mandate and delegated its implementation to CDC.

As a part of implementing that charge on May 1, 2008, CDC established the National Biosurveillance Advisory Subcommittee (NBAS) as a subcommittee to the Advisory Committee to the Director (ACD), CDC. As a subcommittee to the ACD, the NBAS provides counsel to the federal government through the ACD regarding the broad range of issues impacting the development and implementation of a nationwide biosurveillance strategy for human health.

NBAS consists of prominent public and private biosurveillance stakeholders and contributors. To ensure diverse perspectives, the membership of NBAS includes persons from public health, health-care delivery, academia, and other sectors. In developing their recommendations, NBAS conducted fact-finding activities, consulted with experts, and deliberated in small groups and as a whole to assess the state of the biosurveillance enterprise as it currently exists. The committee found that there are wide variations in biosurveillance systems and capabilities. As part of their advisory activities, NBAS envisioned future technology opportunities, and sought to address issues of sustainability of these efforts. Their report, “Improving the Nation’s Ability to Detect and Respond to 21<sup>st</sup> Century Health Threats: First Report of the National Biosurveillance Advisory Subcommittee” was released publicly on October 16, 2009. Included in the report were five high-level, cross-cutting recommendations to be considered by federal leadership. The recommendations are as follows:

- The Executive Branch must define the strategic Goals and priorities of federal investments in biosurveillance activities and technologies, implement a plan to achieve, fund and periodically assess progress towards these goals. To accomplish this, the White House should establish an Interagency Biosurveillance Coordination Committee
- The U.S. National Biosurveillance enterprise must include global health threats in its purview and scope.
- The federal government must make a sustained commitment toward ensuring adequate funding to hire and retain highly competent personnel to run biosurveillance programs at all levels of government.
- Government investments in electronic health records and electronic laboratory data should be leveraged to improve how they serve biosurveillance and public health missions.
- The federal government must make strategic investments in new technologies to strengthen U.S. biosurveillance capabilities.

NBAS members will continue to serve in an advisory capacity and will deliver an updated recommendations report on a regular basis.